

*Arkansas*

# Department of Workforce Services

2007 Annual Report



# Director's Message

The Department of Workforce Services continued to improve services for employers and job seekers in 2007!

DWS offered new training opportunities, workplace credentials and unique transition programs for dislocated workers.

DWS implemented the Training Trust Fund Initiative as a tool to assist unemployed and underemployed individuals. The initiative is a creative approach to provide resources for employers who need funding to train new and incumbent workers in order to remain competitive in the 21st century global economy.

Several offices were relocated to larger facilities in order to better accommodate the needs of employers and job seekers.

This annual report will highlight these accomplishments and many more.



**Artee Williams**  
**DWS Director**

## **Vision:**

To be Arkansas' preferred provider of workforce services and solutions.

## **Mission:**

To enable the Arkansas workforce to compete in the global economy by linking a comprehensive array of services for employers and job seekers.

# Career Readiness Certificate



In 2007, the Department of Workforce Services, in collaboration with the Governor's Workforce Cabinet, implemented the Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate Program.

The initiative is a workforce development program that assures employers that an individual possesses basic workplace skills in Reading for Information, Applied Mathematics and Locating Information.

The certificate program helps employers streamline their hiring process and reduce turnover, overtime and waste while increasing morale.

Upon successfully completing WorkKeys®, a proctored assessment developed by ACT, with a level three or above, job seekers will be awarded a gold, silver or bronze CRC signed by the governor and directors of the Department of Workforce Services and Arkansas Workforce Investment Board.

## **CRC Process:**

- Pass KeyTrain® with a Level 4.
- Pass WorkKeys® with a Level 3.

# Truck Driving Grant

**T**he Department of Workforce Services received a \$1.3 million U.S. Department of Labor Research and Demonstration Grant to train 150 people to become truck drivers.

Mid-South Community College in West Memphis conducted the training, which focused on unemployed and underemployed individuals displaced by the 2005 hurricanes.

The project created a rapid response workforce training program that can deploy to areas impacted by man-made or natural disasters and immediately provide displaced workers with workforce counseling and training to acquire skills needed by the transportation industry.



## Partners:

- Department of Workforce Services
- Arkansas Workforce Investment Board
- Workforce Investment Board of Eastern Arkansas
- Arkansas Workforce Centers
- Mid-South Community College at West Memphis
- Roadmaster Truck Driving School
- Instructional Technologies Inc.
- Applied Simulation Technologies
- JOBehaviors Inc.



# New Arkansan Resource Network



The New Arkansan Resource Network aims to speed the transition of new Arkansans into communities, promote stability and rapid employment with good wages, and enhance economic development.

The network was established with an \$850,000 grant to DWS from the U.S. Department of Labor as part of a research and demonstration project focused on providing services to legal immigrants. The project served more than 3,500 immigrants in 2007.

The welding training program in Malvern is an example of the partnerships envisioned by the New Arkansan Resource Network.

Four welding training classes were conducted, and several trainees were employed by a local employer in Malvern.

## **Vision:**

With the support of our communities, we prepare people who are new to Arkansas for employment in high growth industries, meet local workforce needs, and promote civic integration.

## **Mission:**

To speed the transition of new Arkansans into communities, promote stability and rapid employment with good wages, and enhance economic development.

• New Service to Immigrants •

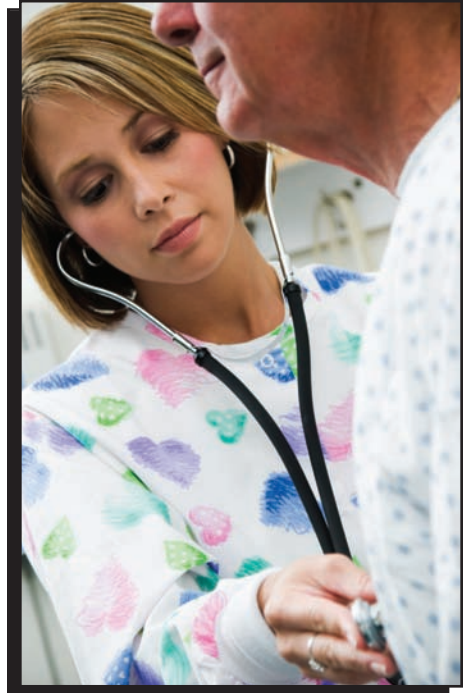
# *Practical Nursing Program*

In order to meet the high demand for nurses in Arkansas and assist dislocated workers with re-employment, the Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force partnered with Arkansas Tech University at Ozark to implement a special Practical Nursing Program in 2007.

Dislocated workers who qualify for Trade Adjustment Assistance as a result of closures or layoffs due to foreign competition are eligible for the program. Participants receive their LPN license after completing a one-year program at Arkansas Tech University at Ozark.

The first class graduated in 2007, and a second class is currently under way.

Because of its success, the program, located in Northwest Arkansas, is serving as a model for other areas of the state.



## **Facts:**

- Eighteen students graduated in 2007.
- Currently, there are 16 enrollees.

# Internet UI Claims System

**ArkNet Web Address:**  
[www.ArkNet.arkansas.gov](http://www.ArkNet.arkansas.gov)

In late 2007, DWS launched ArkNet, an Internet claim filing system that individuals can use to file their weekly claim for unemployment insurance benefits.

ArkNet makes the weekly claim filing process easier and more accurate, and it eliminates long distance phone charges and postage costs. Claimants can file their claims from any computer that has Internet access, whether it's at home, a library or Arkansas Workforce Center.

ArkNet usage continues to grow each week, and DWS projects that in the future it will be the preferred method for filing weekly claims.



# TEA and Work Pays

Calendar Year 2007 marked the second full year that DWS administered the Transitional Employment Assistance Program. TEA provides cash payments, child care and transportation assistance, other work-related support, and diversion assistance to adults and minor parents to assist them with job preparation for demand occupations.

The Work Pays Program, implemented on July 1, 2006, is a post-employment program that further assists former TEA clients who meet income, citizenship, residency, work activity and program eligibility requirements. Work Pays participants are eligible for additional supportive services and assistance, as well as bonuses up to \$3,000 for meeting certain program requirements.

During Calendar Year 2007, legislation was enacted creating the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Oversight Board. The new board will provide oversight and direction for Arkansas' TEA and Work Pays programs, as well as other TANF-funded activities.



## **Cash Assistance:**

- Cash Assistance: \$204 a month for a max of 24 months

## **Bonuses:**

- Stay employed for three consecutive months: \$400
- Stay employed for an additional six consecutive months: \$600
- Exit bonus for meeting work requirements: \$800
- Earnings exceed 150% of the Federal Poverty Level and client exits the program: \$1,200



# Local Offices

Several Arkansas Workforce Centers relocated or experienced significant renovations in 2007.

- **El Dorado** — The new location at 523 E. Sixth St. has allowed the agency to accommodate additional TEA and Work Pays staff to better serve the public.
- **Hope** — A \$400,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development allowed the Migrant Farm Labor Center to build 12 housing units, improve sanitation and make energy improvements to better serve migrant farm workers.
- **Magnolia** — The move to 203 N. Frederick provides the public better access to the services offered at the center.
- **Texarkana** — The Texarkana location includes workforce staff from both Arkansas and Texas. The new location accommodates additional partners and improves access to the public.



**Texarkana**

## Office Contact Information:

- El Dorado — (870) 863-0218
- Hope — (870) 777-5630
- Magnolia — (870) 234-3440
- Texarkana — (870) 216-4011

## Find Other Offices:

- [www.awib.arkansas.gov](http://www.awib.arkansas.gov)
- [www.dws.arkansas.gov](http://www.dws.arkansas.gov)

# Financial Statement

DWS' appropriation for 2007-2008 is \$944,497,072.

## Funds Received

FY 2007-2008

Grants	2007-2008
Personnel Services	\$40,344,919
Maintenance & General Operations	\$36,501,030
Unemployment Insurance Benefits	\$620,000,001
Special Fund	\$15,352,549
Workforce Investment Act	\$58,000,000
UI Trust Fund Loan Interest	\$3,000,001
New Hire Registry	\$507,922
Community Investment Initiative	\$3,500,000
Disaster Relief Payments	\$2,000,000
Training Allowances & Payments	\$15,000,000
Reed Act	\$77,000,000
Transitional Employment Program	\$68,290,650
Training Trust Fund	\$2,500,000
UI Administration Fund	<u>\$2,500,000</u>
<b>Total Funding:</b>	<b>\$944,497,072</b>



## DWS Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund

December 31, 2007

Balance, Beginning of Year	\$160,901,574
<b>Revenues</b>	
Unemployment Insurance Contributions	\$257,076,493
Reimbursement From Other States	\$16,613,552
Reed Act Distributions	\$0
Interest Income	<u>\$8,437,849</u>
Total Revenues	\$282,127,894
<b>Expenditures</b>	
Unemployment Benefit Payments	\$300,194,576
Reed Act Withdrawals*	<u>\$(133)</u>
Total Expenditures	\$300,194,443
Balance, End of Year	\$142,835,025

\*Negative amount is due to a return of Reed Act Funds.

# Stats

## Employment Services

- A total of 144,638 individuals received employment services.
- Examples of services include dislocated worker services, workforce information services, career guidance, job search activities, employment referrals, Workforce Investment Act services and veterans services.

## Legal

- A total of 12,322 fraud and nonfraud overpayments were established totaling \$8,613,221.
- \$2,336,849.03 was recovered by Benefit Payment Control.

## Unemployment Insurance

- \$300,194,576 was paid in regular unemployment insurance benefits and \$7,874,938 in federal unemployment insurance benefits. This totals \$308,069,514.
- 18,214 quarterly wage reports were filed by employers using the online UI tax filing, wage reporting and payment site.

## Hope Migrant Farm Labor Center

- 18,185 qualified individuals registered for migrant services. Services include the following:
  - Registrations
  - Referral Assistance
  - Interviews
  - Lodging

## New Hire Registry

- The New Hire Registry reported 979,466 new hires in 2007.

## Tax Credits

- 11,829 people were certified for the Work Opportunity Tax Credit. This resulted in a potential tax credit of \$31,431,000 for Arkansas employers.

## Web sites

- Several Web sites assist job seekers with their job search.

- **Arkansas JobLink\***

[www.arjoblink.arkansas.gov](http://www.arjoblink.arkansas.gov)

- **Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate\***

[www.ArkansasAtWork.org](http://www.ArkansasAtWork.org)

- **Discover Arkansas\***

[www.discover.arkansas.gov](http://www.discover.arkansas.gov)

- **Real-Life Arkansas\***

[www.real-life.arkansas.gov](http://www.real-life.arkansas.gov)

- **Career Watch Arkansas\***

[www.careerwatch.org](http://www.careerwatch.org)

- **ArkOSCAR\***

[www.arkoscar.org](http://www.arkoscar.org)

- **Arkansas Government Jobs\*\***

[www.arstatejobs.org](http://www.arstatejobs.org)

*\*Maintained by DWS.*

*\*\*Maintained by the Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration*

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